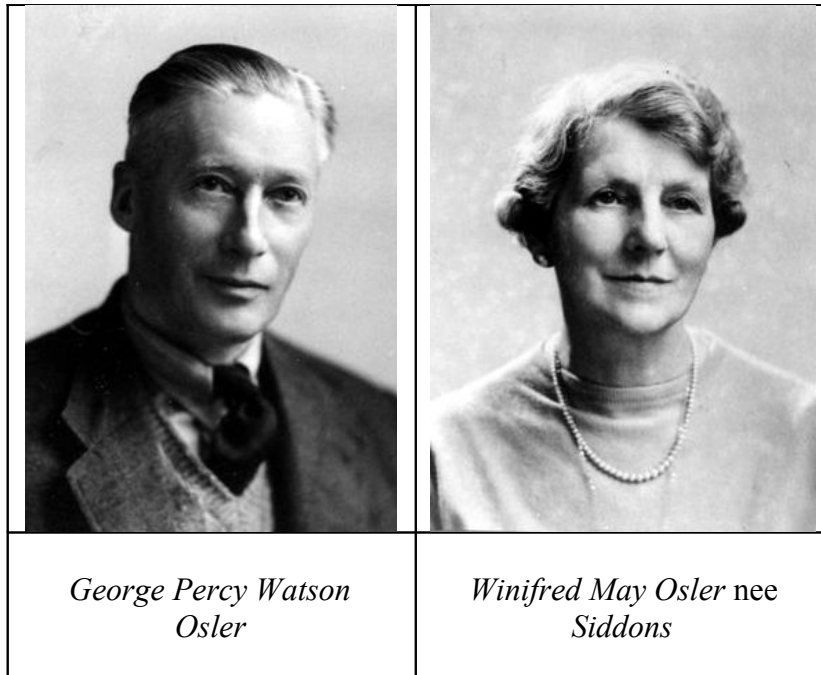


George Percy Osler - Fruit grower in Wickhamford

Early Life

George Percy Watson Osler was born in Brockenhurst, Hampshire in mid-1883, the son of Frank Watson Osler and his wife, Bessie. According to the 1891 census, Frank Osler was living on his own means and ten years later his son was a pupil at a boarding school at Steep, near Petersfield. In the 1901 census he was recorded at the school as 'Percy Osler'.

When he married Winifred May Siddons at St Peter's Church, Bayswater, on 24th October 1907, he gave his home address as 'Wickhamford, Evesham' and his occupation as fruit grower. At the 1911 census, he and Winifred and their two sons, Geoffrey Frank, age 2, and Kenneth Siddons, aged one month, were living in Richmond Park Avenue, Bournemouth. The family may have been living there whilst Winifred had her baby and for a short period afterwards.



Wickhamford

The Land Valuation Survey of 1912-1913 listed George Percy Osler as living at 1 Longdon Hill, Wickhamford. This was one of a pair of brick and tile cottages 'in good repair', with three bedrooms (one over the back kitchen), a living room, a pantry, a wash-house and tap water. He rented the cottage from local farmer Benjamin Carter. In addition, George Osler rented the 14 acres of agricultural land behind his cottage from the Trustees of the Estate of the late John Pickup Lord. The survey described this field as market garden land and one pasture field, which was 'flat and wet'. It had seven timber and iron sheds on it and was planted with plums. The varieties mentioned were Pershore, Choice, Prolific, Victoria and Damascene. There was also timber valued at £5 and one oak tree and two elms in the pasture field.

A public footpath crossed the land. The rent payable on the cottage was £8 per quarter and £28 5s on the land.

Canada

On 4th November 1912 the Osler family sailed, from Liverpool, on the Canadian Pacific Railway Atlantic Steamship Line vessel 'Lake Manitoba' for Montreal, Canada. He gave his occupation on the ship's passenger list as fruit grower. Attestation Papers exist for George Percy Osler joining the Canadian Army in Victoria, British Columbia.

DUPLICATE ✓

No. 11 C.A.S.C. Service Company.
ATTESTATION PAPER.

No. 1286112.
Folio.

CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

QUESTIONS TO BE PUT BEFORE ATTESTATION.
(ANSWERS)

1. What is your surname? Osler
- 1a. What are your Christian names? George Percy
- 1b. What is your present address? 3698 Sumner Ave Victoria B.C.
2. In what Town, Township or Parish, and in what Country were you born? Brookhurst Hants England
3. What is the name of your next-of-kin? Wm Fred W Osler
4. What is the address of your next-of-kin? 3698 Sumner Ave Victoria B.C.
- 4a. What is the relationship of your next-of-kin? Wife
5. What is the date of your birth? July 31st 1884
6. What is your Trade or Calling? Medicine
7. Are you married? Yes
8. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated and inoculated? Yes
9. Do you now belong to the Active Militia? Yes
10. Have you ever served in any Military Force? Yes 1900 C.A.S.C. G.P.O.
If so, state the nature of your service.
11. Do you understand the nature and terms of your engagement? Yes as was
12. Are you willing to be attested to serve in the CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE? Yes

DECLARATION TO BE MADE BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.

I, G P Osler, do solemnly declare that the above are answers made by me to the above questions and that they are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements by me now made, and I hereby engage and agree to serve in the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force, and to be attached to any arm of the service therein, for the term of one year, or during the war now existing between Great Britain and Germany should that war last longer than one year, and for six months after the termination of that war provided His Majesty should so long require my services, or until legally discharged.

G Osler (Signature of Recruit)

Date: 27-9-1912 R Hope-Jones (Signature of Witness)

OATH TO BE TAKEN BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.

I, G P Osler, do make Oath, that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will as in duty bound honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, in Person, Crown and Dignity, against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of all the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

G Osler (Signature of Recruit)

Date: 27-9-1912 R Hope-Jones (Signature of Witness)

CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE.

The Recruit above-named was cautioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act.

The above questions were then read to the Recruit in my presence.

I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly entered as replied to, and the said Recruit has made and signed the declaration and taken the oath before me, at Victoria B.C. this 27th day of September 1912.

W. J. [Signature] (Signature of Justice)

M. O. W. 28
FORM 104
H. Q. 1153/12

Daily Orders Part II No. 12 d/12-11-12.

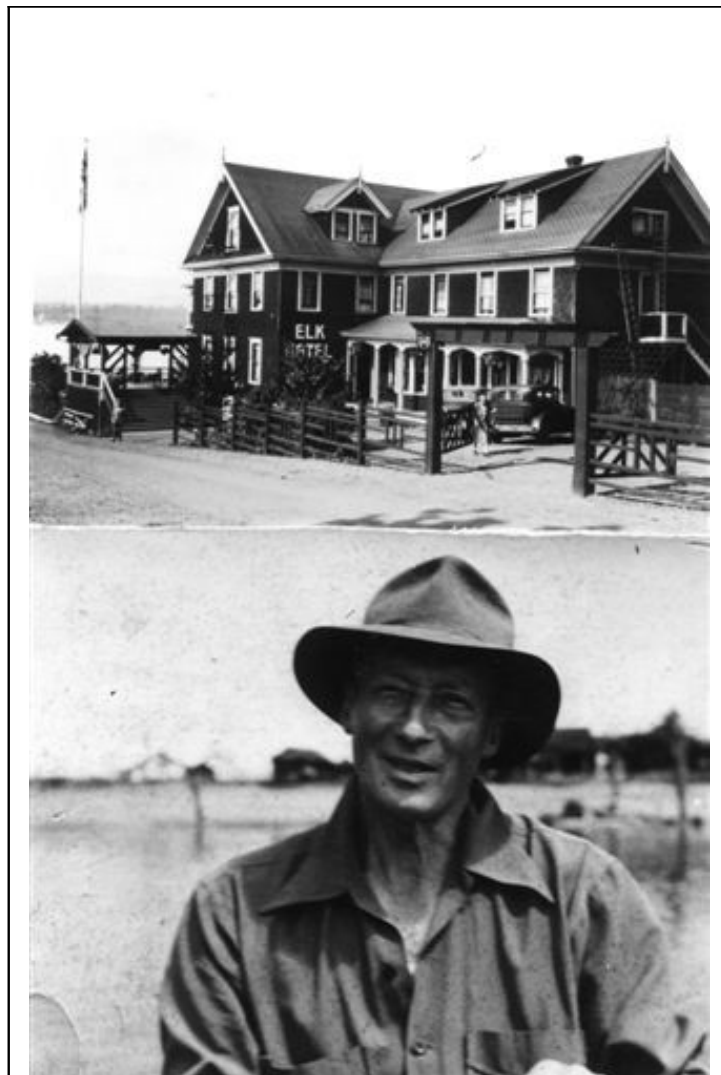
Attestation Paper for George Percy Osler

this time the Armistice had been signed and there is no record of his going to Europe with the Army.

The next record of the Osler family is of them sailing again to Canada from the U.K., this time from Southampton, on 9th December 1921. They were aboard the Canadian Pacific ship ‘*Scandinavian*’, bound for St Johns, New Brunswick. By this time George and Winifred were accompanied by four sons – Geoffrey, Kenneth, Philip, aged 4, and Thomas, aged 1.

Family Life in Canada

A friend of the Oslers, Sydney Burnaby Wood D’Esterre (known as Dusty) had bought the Elk Hotel, on the sea shore at Comox, on Vancouver Island in 1922. George Osler, always known as ‘Jock’ by this time, ran the hotel with Winifred.



The Elk Hotel, Comox and George Osler by the shore



The Osler family in the late 1920s.

From the left: Philip, 'Dusty' D'Esterre, Geoffrey, Kenneth, George Percy ('Jock'), Winifred and Thomas.

Kenneth, who became a schoolmaster, was killed in Normandy on 12th June 1944 (D-Day+6) and is buried in Beny-sur-Mer. Geoffrey became a psychiatrist in New York and Thomas became a surgeon in Vancouver. Philip died in a car accident when in his early twenties. Winifred Osler, who had been an accomplished singer (see below) before her marriage, died on 26th November 1954. George Percy Watson Osler died, aged 83, on 21st February 1968 and both he and his wife are buried in Comox.

Appendix

1907. Marriage solemnized at <u>S Peter's</u> in the parish of <u>S. Peter's, Bayswater</u> in the County of <u>London</u>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father
436	Oct. 24	George Percy Watson Osler	24	Bachelor	Fruit Grower	Wickhamford, Essex.	Frank Watson Osler (Dec?)	Gentleman
	1907	Winifred May Siddons	27	Spinster	—	89 Linden Gardens W.	George Siddons	Auctioneer.
Married in the <u>Parish Church</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <u>Church of England</u> by <u>George Siddons</u> or after <u>Mass</u> by me, <u>H. S. Ronalds</u>								
This Marriage was solemnized between us, <u>George Percy Watson Osler</u> and <u>Winifred May Siddons</u>			in the Presence of us, <u>George Siddons</u> and <u>H. S. Ronalds</u>			<u>H. P. Osler</u>		

Marriage entry for George Osler and Winifred Siddons

Miss Winifred Siddons, soprano.

There are a number of reports in local newspapers in various parts of England, in the period from 1905 until 1909, of Winifred's concert appearances. She continued to perform under her maiden name after her marriage. In 1905 she was described as the 'Principle Artiste' in the cantata 'St Cecilia's Day' at the Corn Exchange, Rochford, Essex. During 1906 she performed at Portsmouth Town Hall and in North Devon. In 1907 she sang with the Southend Athenaeum Society and at a concert reported in the *Coventry Herald* as singing a duet, giving a humorous monologue and performing character sketches from Dickens. In 1909 she was at a concert in Lyndhurst at St Michael's Church.

In Wickhamford, at a garden party held at Field Farm to raise funds for the building of the new Wesleyan Church in Evesham, in June 1907, she was described in a public notice for the event as Mrs G. P. Osler, as a well-known Artist (see article '*Edwardian Wickhamford*').

Acknowledgements – Many thanks are due to Rosanne Richards and Heather Catchpole for supplying the photographs of the Osler family and details of their life in Canada.

Tom Locke – April 2014 (Revised November 2014)